WEDDING GARMENT:

Or, The Honourable State of MATRIMONY.

Delivered in a Wedding-Sermon, under these following Heads.

I. Shewing that it is a Divine Institution, and our blessed Saviour himself, here pass'd under the Similitude of a Bridegroom, and the Church his beloved Spouse.

II. This shews that Persons thus joyned, shall remain spotless and undefiled.

III. A Man shall not only provide Food and Raiment, Necessaries of this Life; but likewise by his upright Conversation, become a Pattern of Piety to his Wife and Family, of whom he is the Head.

IV. The Womans Duty, as she is the Wife of one Husband, in the Fear of God, to honour and obey.

V. As they are united together in this blessed State, both their Duties is to bear with one another, that they may live in Love and Concord here, and at length be crown'd with eternal Joy in another World.

Russel Rob. Wadhurst

Heb. 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled*

By *Robert Russel*, of *Wadhurst* in *Sussex*.

Printed for *J. Blare*, at the *Looking-glass* on *London-Bridge*. 1692.

THE Wedding Garment, &c.

Mark 10. 39.

And they twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. Whom therefore God hath joyned together, let no Man put asunder.

THE Occasion of these Words of our blessed Saviour, may be taken from that Question which the Pharisees asked him; *Ver.* 1. 2. but it was only to tempt him, saying, *Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife?* Jesus answered him *Ver.* 3. *What did Moses command you.* And they said, *Ver.* 4. *Moses suffered to write a Bill of Divorcement, and to put her away.* *And Jesus answered and said unto them,* Verse 5. *that for the hardness of your Hearts he wrote you this Precept: But from the beginning of the Creation God made them Male and Female.* Ver. 6. And then he adds here in my Text

F

For this cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife: And they twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. Whom therefore God hath joyned together, let no Man put asunder. I might insist upon all these three Verses, but the main scope and drift of my Discourse shall be only on the middlemost of them, which is this.

And they twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. From this Text of Scripture, we may learn what Unity there is betwixt Man and Wife, when they are joyned together in Marriage. *And they twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. Whom therefore God hath joyned together, let no man put asunder.*

The Doctrine which I shall observe from these Words, is this.

That Man and Wife being joined together by God in the holy State of Matrimony, they cannot, must not, and ought not to be parted. *For this Cause,* saith Christ, *shall a man leave Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife: And they twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. Whom therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*

Now in my further prosecution of this subject, I shall proceed after this Order.

First, I ſhall ſhew you who they be that are joyned together by God.

Secondly, That thoſe that are thus joined by God, they muſt not, nor ought not to be parted.

Thirdly, The reaſon why they cannot, and muſt not be parted, is becauſe of the near Union that is betwixt them, *for they twain are one Fleſh.*

And laſtly, I ſhall make ſome uſe of it by way of Application.

I begin with the firſt.

Who they are that are joined together by God; they are ſuch as joyn together in Marriage, according to God's own Word; that is, for thoſe Cauſes for which Matrimony was at firſt ordained: I will name theſe three.

First, It was ordained for the Propagation of Children, that they might be brought up in the fear of the Lord. God hath ordained Marriage for the Increaſe of Mankind, that his Name might be glorified in them, and by them.

Secondly, God hath ordained Marriage for the preventing of Sin, and the avoiding of Fornication; this is one chief end why Matrimony was ordained. Now mark, the Words of *St. Paul*, where he treats concerning Marriage, 1 *Cor.* 7. 1, 2. *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good*

for

for a Man not to touch a Woman. But nevertheless, saith he, *to avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and let every Woman have her own Husband.* It is good for a man not to touch a woman, because thereby the Devil is apt to be tempting such to sin. But yet when a man hath not the Gift of Continency; when he cannot contain so as to keep his Body pure and undefiled, then let him marry, nay upon that Case, he must and ought to marry, for he sins if he doth not marry; nay, in not marrying, he commits a double sin: 1. the sin of Fornication or Adultery, which he runs himself into, having not the Gift of Continency. Secondly, He sins, in that he lives in a neglect of that holy Ordinance which God hath ordained and instituted for the preventing of sin; indeed Matrimony is a thing in it self indifferent, for a man sins not, let him marry or not marry; for saith the Apostle, *Ver.* 27. *Art thou loosed from a Wife, seek not a Wife? Art thou bound to a Wife, seek not to be loosed?* *St. Paul* speaks there of indifferency, when a Man hath Power over his Will, and hath a Gift to contain, and keep his Body the pure and clean Temple of the Holy Ghost; nay, in that, a single Life of the two is the best; for, saith he, *Ver.* 38. *He that giveth her in Marriage doth well; but he that giveth her not in Marriage doth better.*

And the Apoſtle wiſheth that all were, even as he is, that is ſingle: And the reaſon he gives, is this, *That ſuch ſhall have trouble in the Fleſh*, Ver. 28. for Ver 32. *He would have them without Careſulneſs; for he that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how he may pleaſe the Lord: But he that is married, careth for the things of the World, how he may pleaſe his Wife.* So in that reſpect an unmarried Life is the beſt of the two: But yet ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *If he be married he hath not ſinned, not yet doth he ſin if he marries not.* But yet when a Man hath not the Gift of Continency, when a Man and a Virgin burns in Luſt one towards another, and yet doth not marry, they ſin double; for beſides the ſin of Fornication, they ſin againſt that holy Ordinance which God hath ordained for the preventing of ſin. You may ſee it plain in reſpect of other ſins, as Drunkenneſs and Murder: ſuppoſe God hath given Means for the preventing of theſe ſins, though the Means are indifferent in themſelves, they may be uſed, and they may not; but yet when a Man through Temptation, runs into theſe ſins of Drunkenneſs and Murder, and may uſe Means to prevent it, he ſins not only in the groſer act, but he ſins in not uſing the Means to prevent it. So it is in reſpect of Marriage; the Apoſtle having told them, *Ver.* 8. that it is good for them

them if they continue even as he is: But saith he, *Ver.* 9. *If they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn:* That is, to burn in Lust. Mark another Scripture, which I shall hint unto you, and that is in *Heb.* 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all things, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will Judge.* Mark it, Marriage is honourable, the Marriage-Bed is honourable, and Children are a great Blessing; but as for Whoremongers and Adulterers, they shall not escape God's just Judgments. That's the second Cause why Matrimony was ordained; it was ordained for the preventing of Sin, and the avoiding of Fornication.

Thirdly, It was ordained for the mutual Society, Help and Comfort that Man and Wife ought to have of one another, both in Prosperity and in Adversity. Now this is the first Cause that the Scripture mentions, why Matrimony was ordained, it is *Gen.* 2. 18. *God said, it is not meet that the Man should be alone, but that there should be an Help-meet for him: So the Lord God caused a deep Sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and the Lord opened his Side, and took out a Rib, and of that Rib made he Woman.* It is true, *Adam* had all sorts of living Creatures with him to keep him company, as all sorts of Beast and Fowls,

and Fiſhes; but none of theſe was fitting to be a Help meet for him; therefore it pleaſed God to make one of his Likeneſs, to be a Help and Comfort to him; and from this we muſt learn, that when a Man and a Woman is joined together in Marriage, they ought to be a Help and Comfort to one another as long as they live together. Thus I have finiſhed the firſt Particular, and ſhewed you who they are that are joined together by God; that is, thoſe that join together according to God's Laws; or when they uſe Matrimony, for thoſe three Cauſes for which it was ordained: Which is, 1. For the Propagation of Children. 2. For the avoiding of Fornication. 3. To be a Help and Comfort one to another.

Secondly, My ſecond Particular is this, That thoſe whom God hath thus joined together, muſt not, nor ought not to be parted. There are but two Cauſes in the Scripture for Man and Wife lawfully to part. The 1. is mentioned by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 15. *When Man and Wife can by no poſſible means agree, but live in continual Strife and Debate, and in danger of one anothers Lives, then they, if they will, may part aſunder: For,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *a Brother or a Siſter is not under Bondage in ſuch Caſes; but God hath called us unto Peace.*

2. The other Cauſe is mentioned by our bleſſed Saviour, *Mat.* 5. 32. for the Cauſe of Fornication;

nication; when he tells the Pharisees, *That whoso will put away his Wife, let him write her a Bill of Divorcement. But I say unto you, whosoever putteth away his Wife, save for the cause of Fornication, causeth her to commit Adultery.* This teacheth us, that for the cause of Fornication a Man may lawfully put away his Wife: And the reason of it is very good, for as long as Man and Wife faithfully keep the Marriage-Bed, and remain true and constant one to the other, he to her, and she to him, they two remain one Flesh; but when she once forsakes his Bed, and goes after other Lovers, then the Union is broken, they are no longer one Flesh, and therefore may lawfully be parted; but for no other Cause than this may a Man put away his Wife; *Whom therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.* Consider this, that Man and Woman ought not to be parted; not only after they are joined in Marriage, but before, even as soon as the Contract is made betwixt them. For consider, when once a Man and his Virgin hath made a Contract and Bargain one with another, in the Presence of God, to remain for ever true and constant one to another, I tell you, they are as truly Man and Wife as if they were never so much married; for publick Matrimony was ordained by Law, only to confirm the Contract before Men, which they have made in the sight of God: And upon this

this account the publick use of Matrimony is very necessary, because, if they are not married according to the Laws of the Church of *England*, then they might join themselves together by way of Contract, and then go off, and prove false one to another, and the Laws of Man never teach them: for man cannot have any assurance that such are joined together by way of Contract, until it is confirmed by Marriage. But let such consider, that when once the Contract and Promise is made betwixt them, they twain immediately become one Flesh, they are streight Man and Wife together; and though they are not publickly married as yet, yet let them know, they cannot lawfully be parted, though the Laws of Man does not bind them from parting, yet the Laws of God doth; for God, who seeth and knows all things, takes Notes of what passes betwixt them; and therefore, though they do escape Mans Laws, yet they shall not escape the just Judgment of God. That Example is most dreadful, of a Maid, who made a Contract and Promise with one whose Name was *Bateman*, it was so firm, that there passed a piece of Gold betwixt them to confirm it, and they after all, she unfaithfully left him, and went and was married to another; but in so doing, she ruined him, and brought God's dreadful Judgments upon her self. And some Parents there are,

who

who go about to hinder their Childrens Marriage, when the Knot of Love and Unity is past between them, and by that means they bring them to Ruine. Thus we see, that when once Man and Woman is joined together, and become one Flesh, they cannot lawfully be parted, *For whom God hath joined together, let no Man put asunder.* Thus for the second Particular, That those whom God hath joined together, they cannot, must not, and ought not to be parted.

Thirdly, A third thing considerable in the Text, is the reason why they that are joined by God cannot be parted; and that is because of the near Union that is betwixt them; *They twain are one Flesh, so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh.* There was a near Union betwixt *Adam* and his Wife, because she was made out of him; *For the Lord God caused a deep Sleep to fall upon Adam, and then he opened his Side, and took out a Rib, and closed up the Flesh instead thereof*; and of that Rib he made Eve his Wife, and by that means they became one Flesh, and as near a Union there is betwixt Man and Wife that is joined together in Marriage: therefore for this Cause, saith Almighty God, *Gen.* 2. 24. *shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife: And they twain shall be one Flesh.* Compared with *Mark* 10. 7. *Mat.* 19. 6. *Eph.* 5. 31. Now the Unity between Man and Wife may

may be considered in these Three Respects.

1. In respect of the Contract and Promise that is made betwixt them, to be true and faithful one to the other, and to forsake all others, and keep together as long as Life shall last. Now in this respect they become one Flesh; for when once they break their Marriage Covenant in forsaking the Marriage-Bed, and going after Harlots, then their Union is broken, they are no longer one Flesh.

2. Man and Wife being joined together in Marriage, become one, in respect also of the near Relation that is betwixt them: for when once a Man and a Woman is joined together in Wedlock, then whosoever is related to one, becomes also related to the other; as in particular, his Father becomes her Father, his Mother becomes her Mother, his Brethren her Brethren, his Sisters her Sisters; his Children which he had before they came together, now in respect of their Union, they become her Children also.

Thirdly and lastly, Man and Woman being joined together in Marriage, become one also, in respect of the Substance and earthly Endowments: His House becomes hers, his Land hers, his Money hers, and her House, and Land, and Money is also his; so that whatsoever is his, is also hers, and whatsoever is hers, is also his; and whosoever is related to the one, is also related to the other. Now in all these Respects,

Man

Man and VVoman being joined together are one. Now consider, that whosoever you be that are not only married, but are already entered into a Covenent and Contract one with another, your Relation is so near that you cannot lawfully be parted. And so I have gone through these three particular Branches of the Text: 1. VVho they are that are joined by God. 2. They that are thus joined by God, cannot, nor ought not to be parted. 3. The Reason why they ought not to be parted, is because they are one Flesh: *For they twain are one Flesh; so then they are no more twain, but one Flesh. Whom therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.* Thus much for the doctrinal Part.

The APPLICATION.

THE first and main Use that I shall make of this Point, shall be of Exhortation. 1. I exhort you especially, you that are newly entred into the holy State of Matrimony, that you would live together, as becomes those that are joined by God in that holy State, in the performing of those Duties which God hath required of one to the other: for as there are several Duties which Parents and Children, Masters and Servants owe one to the other: so

there

there are several Duties which Husbands and Wives owe one to the other. Now there are some Duties which Husbands owe unto their Wives, and also there are some Duties which Wives owe unto their Husbands: I shall but just name them.

1. There are some Duties which Husbands owe unto their Wives: 1. Is endearing Love, like unto the Love of Christ unto his Church, as you are commanded, *Eph.* 5. 25. *Husbands love your Wives, even as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it*: not giving them bitter Speeches, reviling them, and railing at them for their good Counsel; but let your Speeches and Behaviour toward her, be sweet, meek and loving, *Gal.* 3. 19 *Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter against them.*

2. Live with your Wives, and do not depart from them: 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. *Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge.* So, *Prov.* 5. 18, 19. *Rejoyce with the Wife of thy youth: Let her be as the loving Hind, and pleasant Roe; let her Breast satisfie thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her Love.*

3. They ought to do their Endeavour, as far as they are able, to provide for their Wives Food and Raiment, and to nourish and cherish them as their own Bodies: *Eph.* 5. 28, 29. *So ought Men to love their Wives as their own Bodies; for he that loveth his Wife, loveth himself:*

himself for no man ever yet hateth his own Flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it.

4. Another Duty which Husbands owe unto their VVives, is Faithfulness to the Bed, in keeping their Marriage Covenant, in cleaving to none but to their VVives, *Hos.* 3. 3.

5. Protection of them from VVrongs, and covering their Infirmities, as *David* defended his two VVives, 1 *Sam.* 30. 18. Also care to please them in all lawful things.

Sixthly, and lastly, A last Duty which I shall mention, that Husbands owe to their VVives, is to pray with them, and for them, to perform Family Duties with them every Night and Morning, in Reading and Praying.

Beloved Friends, if you are entered now into the holy State of Matrimony, and are joined to a VVife, O be you careful to help her in the way to Heaven! If she be ignorant, instruct her in the ways of God, which will make for her everlasting Peace; and timely admonish her of such sins as you know her to be guilty of, and exhort her to Repentance. And do you also encourage her in the way of well-doing.

Friends, If your meeting here in the State of VVedlock will but be an occasion of your meeting together in Heaven, O it is then a happy Meeting indeed! O let it be your care to make it so! VVill it not be a joyful thing for

you and your VVife to meet at last in Heaven? O now you have a happy Opportunity to help one another in the way thither, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. *Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, as being Heirs together of the Grace of Life, that your Prayers be not hindered.*

But as there are Duties which Husbands owe to their VVives, so, 2. There are some Duties which VVives owe unto their Husbands. I shall but just name them.

The First, Is to love them above all others in the VVorld: VVives are commanded to love their Husbands, *Tit.* 2. 4.

2. To be faithful to their Husbands, in reference to their Marriage Covenant, to their Estate, or to any Secret their Husbands intrusts them with, 1 *Tim* 3. 11. *Even so must the VVives be, sober, grave and faithful in all things.*

3. VVives owe to their Husbands Reverence, *Eph.* 5. 33. *Let the VVife see that she reverence her Husband.*

4. VVives must be subject to their Husbands in all lawful things, as unto Christ, *Eph.* 5. 22. 24. *VVives, submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord.* So *Ver.* 24. *As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the VVives be unto their own Husbands in all things.*

5. Another Duty, is Carefulness to please their Husbands, suiting themselves to their Dispositions.

6. To

6. To help her Husband to provide for their Family. Now this is a Character which *Solomon* gives of a good Wife, *Prov.* 31. 27. *She looketh well to the ways of her Houſhold, and eateth not the Bread of Idleneſs.*

Sevently and laſtly, A laſt Duty which Wives owe to their Husbands, is to give ear to their godly Counſels and Admonitions, to reprove and admoniſh them of their wicked Vices, to teach them the ways of God, if they are ignorant; to exhort them to repent, to encourage them in well-doing, and help them in their way to Heaven, and to pray for them. This is a godly Counſel which St. *Peter* gives to Wives, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1, 2. *Ye Wives, be in ſubjection to your own Husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they alſo may without the Word be won by the Converſation of the Wife: Whilſt they behold chaſt Converſation coupled with Fear.* Theſe are thoſe Duties which Husbands and Wives owe one to another. And that ſhall ſuffice for my firſt Uſe, which is of Exhortation.

I will make but one Uſe more, and that ſhall be of Inſtruction. Now from this Subject, concerning the Union betwixt Man and Wife, we may learn theſe two things.

1. The Union betwixt Chriſt and his Church, whereof every Saint is a Member; for, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 5. *As the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even ſo Chriſt is the Head*

of the Church. Therefore he exhorts Men to love their Wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; the Church calls Christ her Husband, and Christ calls her his Spouse. Now in this respect St. *Paul* quotes the Words of our blessed Saviour, in the Words before my Text, *Eph.* 5. 31. *For this Cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and be joyned to his Wife, and they twain shall be one Flesh.* But then afterwards the Apostle calls it a Mystery, and then shews them his meaning, *Ver.* 32. that he speaks concerning Christ and his Church, for as it is in regard of Man and Wife, before a Man takes her to be his Wife, he is as it were a Stranger unto her; but as soon as ever they are entred into a Covenant one with another, and make a Contract with one another, then they are united and become one. Thus it is betwixt Christ and a Member of his Church; all the time a Man is out of Christ, and in his natural Estate, he is a meer Stranger to Christ, and to all his Benefits; but as soon as ever he hath covenanted to be Christ's, as soon as ever as he hath made a firm Contract, and is married to Christ, then he becomes one with Christ, then Christ is his, and he is Christ's; Christ is in him, and he in Christ: This the Apostle proves, 1 *Cor.* 6. 16. 17. *What, know ye not that he that is joyned to an Harlot is one Body? for two (saith he) is one Flesh: But he that is joyned to the Lord, is*

one

one Spirit. As there is a fleshly Union betwixt a Man and Woman when they are joined in Marriage, even so there is a spiritual Union betwixt Christ and a Believer, when they are joined by Faith, when a Believer is joined to Christ by Faith. Now I shall compare the Union betwixt Christ and his Church, to the Union betwixt Man and Wife in these Respects.

1. Before a Man was joined to his Wife by a Marriage Covenant, it may be his Love was set upon others besides her; but now being entered into a Marriage Covenant with her, now he forsakes all his other Loves, and cleaves fully and wholly to her, and remains true and constant to her so long as they both shall live. So it is betwixt Christ and a Believer; all the time that he was out of Christ, he had many Lovers, the World was his Lover, the Flesh was his Beloved, his carnal Pleasures his merry Companions, his sinful Delights, all these were his Lovers. Ay, But now he hath made a Covenant with Christ to be his, now he is married to Christ by Faith, and therefore now he forsakes all his other Lovers, he casteth them all out of his Heart, and cleaves fully and wholly to Christ. Now he is content to forsake Father and Mother, and all whatsoever is near or dear unto him for Christ's Sake; now Christ himself saith, *Mat.* 10. 37. *He that forsaketh not, he that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth Son or Daugh-*

ter more than me, is not worthy of me. So alſo he that loveth any one, doting on Luſt more than Chriſt, is not worthy of him. So, *Luke* 14. 26. *He that hateth not Father and Mother, yea, and his own Life too, for my ſake, cannot be my Diſciple.* That is, when they ſtand in competition with Chriſt, they that would be Chriſt's Spouſe, muſt take him, not only as their Huſband, but alſo as their Lord and Saviour, their Lord and Maſter, to be ruled and governed by him, and forſake all ſinful Delights which are dear and pleaſant to them for his Sake.

2. The Union betwixt Chriſt and his Church, is compared to the Union betwixt Man and Wife, in reſpect of the new Relation and Benefits which comes by this Union. When once a Virgin is betrothed to a Man, then whoſoever is related unto him, doth alſo become related to her; his Father is her Father, his Brothers and Siſters, becomes her Brothers and Siſters, his Houſe is her Houſe, his Land her Land; ſo whatſoever is his, becomes hers.

Thus it is, when a Believer is married unto Jeſus Chriſt, then that Believer is immediately received into a new Relation; for God, who is the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, becomes his Father, and he being united to Chriſt, becomes God's adopted Son; the Spirit of God is his to comfort him, and at the laſt, the Kingdom of Heaven ſhall be his, and he ſhall be

be a Co-heir with Christ, and reign with him for ever and ever. Believers, when once they are married unto Christ, then all things becomes theirs; as it is, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours: And you are Christs, and Christ is Gods.* Indeed a wicked Man, though he enjoys most of the World, yet he can claim a Right to nothing; but a Saint, though he enjoys least, yet he hath a Right to all things; but on the other side, a Sinner that is out of Christ, he is of all others the most miserable, for God is none of his, and Christ is none of his, and he hath no Right to Heaven, nor no Right to any thing but Hell and Damnation.

Lastly, As when a Man and his Wife is joined together in Marriage, they cannot lawfully be parted; even so there is no parting Christ and a Believer asunder; for saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. 38. *For I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2. From the Union that is betwixt Man and Wife that are joined in Marriage, we may learn something also concerning the Union that shall be betwixt the Saints hereafter in Heaven. As Man and Wife being joined together in Marri-

age

age, are one in a natural ſence, even ſo the Saints, the Spouſe of Chriſt, are one in a ſpiritual ſence; the Saints are both one with Chriſt, and one with another; the Union betwixt the Saints are ſo near, that they make but one Church Militant hear on Earth, and they ſhall make but one Church Triumphant in Heaven. Now in *Mat.* 22. 23, 24, 25, 26. *The Sadduces, which ſay there is no Reſurrection, came to Chriſt, and asked him, ſaying, Maſter, Moſes ſaid, if a Man die, having no Children, his Brother ſhall marry his Wife, and raiſe up Seed unto his Brother. Now, ſaith he, there were ſeven Brethren, and the firſt, when he had married a Wife, deceaſed, and having no Iſſue, left his Wife unto his Brother: Likewiſe the ſecond alſo, and the third, unto the ſeventh: And laſt of all the Woman died alſo. Therefore, ſay they, in the Reſurrection, whoſe Wife will ſhe be of the ſeven, for they have all had her.* But then ſee what our Saviour anſwered them, *Ver.* 29. 30. *Ye do err in your Hearts, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God: For in the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage; but are like the Angels of God.* This therefore was a very ſilly Queſtion which the Phariſees asked our Saviour Chriſt, as if in Heaven there were Marrying and giving in Marriage; whereas there ſhall be no need of them, for all Ordinances ſhall then vaniſh away, all the Saints in Heaven ſhall be ſo near united together,

gether, ſo there ſhall be none of the Union of Marriage. Now when Chriſt told the Phariſees, that in the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage; is as much as if he had told them in plain Words, you ask whoſe Wife ſhe ſhall be of the ſeven; why as many of the ſeven as were married to Chriſt; that is, if ſhe were alſo married to Chriſt; ſo many of them ſhe will own for her Husbands, and no more; if they were all married to Chriſt, then ſhe will own them all for her Husbands. As a godly Father will own none of all his Children at the Reſurrection, but ſuch of them as were God's Children; even ſo the godly Husband will own none of his Wives, though he have had never ſo many Wives, but ſuch of them as were Married to Chriſt. So alſo, if a Wife has had never ſo many Husbands, yet at the Reſurrection, ſhe will own none of them, but ſuch as were married to Chriſt at the Reſurrection; theſe ſeven Husbands, as many of them as were married to Chriſt, ſhall own one another as Brethren: And they ſhall own her as their Wife, and ſhe ſhall own them as her Husbands; and beſides, when this Woman, and theſe her Husbands ſhall meet in Heaven, there ſhall be as near a Union betwixt theſe Brethren, as there ſhall be betwixt ſhe and them; yet there ſhall not be a greater Union betwixt theſe Brethren, or betwixt them and their Wife, then there ſhall be betwixt them and all the reſt of

the

the Saints, the greatest part of which were before Strangers unto them here upon Earth; for I told you before, that all the Saints in Heaven shall make but one triumphant Church; Christ and they make but one Body; Christ is the Head, and they are all Members, and therefore there must needs be a near Union betwixt all Christ's Members in Heaven; there shall not only be a near Union betwixt near Relations, as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children; but amongst all the Saints in general: there shall be a nearer and sweeter Union amongst all the Saints in Heaven, than ever there was betwixt Man and Wife here upon Earth; for the lovingest Couple that ever lived, have had some Strifes, some Jars and Tumults, some Feuds and Debates in several Points; but when once we come to Heaven, we shall then be all perfectly agreed, then we shall all with one Heart and Mind, rejoyce one with another, and that for ever.

Let therefore Man and Wife so live together in this World instructing, exhorting, and admonishing one another, and praying with, and for one another, and helping one another in the way to Heaven; and then at last you shall meet together in everlasting Glory, and sit down to rest with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*; where you shall behold God Face to Face; in whose Presence there is fulness of Joy, and at whose Right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore.

Which God of his Mercy grant unto us all. Amen.

F I N I S.